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tion; labor is free only when there is complete power of substitution.

The book may not be entirely convincing at all points, but it is suggestive and stimulating. Professor Patten has performed a service to economic science by insisting on the study of fundamental rather than surface relations, and by bringing into that study viewpoints that are distinctively new.

It is unfortunate that so broad a treatment has been condensed into a book of 237 pages. There are many points that seem to have been needlessly obscured by condensation. Professor Patten's style is more epigrammatic than in earlier works, and there is an almost total absence of the illustrative material that has clarified the work of some of the masters of economic theory. For these reasons the book is more difficult than the nature of the subject-matter would seem to make necessary.

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*Lectures on the Theory of Economics.* By FREDERICK CHARLES HICKS. Cincinnati: The University of Cincinnati Press, 1901. 12mo, pp. xii + 289.

THESE lectures are distributed under the three general heads, "Prolegomena," "Production," and "Distribution." The subjects treated are those usually discussed under these divisions. Successive numbers are used throughout the body of the book to indicate the paragraphs devoted to the topics bearing corresponding numbers in the table of contents. It would have been an improvement if the topics themselves had been reproduced in heavier type, as is done, for instance, in Walker's *Political Economy*. The general aspect of the book is hardly in correspondence with the dignity of its title, certainly not with the intellectual worth of its contents.

Like the average book on economic theory, the present work largely consists in a reshaping of old doctrines from definitions peculiar to the writer. An idea of its trend may therefore best be given by presenting some of the concepts from which it proceeds. Wealth is defined as "whatever possesses the power of want attraction" (p. 20), the expression, "power of want attraction," being preferred to the term "utility" on account of the popular connotations of the latter. Value is "the amount of the power of want-attraction possessed by any commodity" (p. 26). (It would be interesting to have the author's definition of commodity, though I believe it is nowhere given.) Capital consists of the mate-

rials "that are available for aiding in the production of wealth" (p. 91), thus including in interest much of what is usually called economic rent. The use of the term rent is restricted to "the return to the owner of situation for its services" (p. 224). I may add, also, that the factors of production are here set down as situation, capital, labor, and enterprise.

It is difficult to see how with such broad definitions the author could avoid being led beyond the limits of political economy as they are ordinarily understood, and as they are indicated by his treatment, into the whole science and art of life. "Economics," he says, "may be defined as the science that treats of human activity in its relation to the pursuit of the satisfaction of wants" (p. 4), and he immediately adds that "in this view of the nature of economics, the scope of the subject embraces all human activity." This does not seem consistent with the statement that "the consumption of commodities lies outside the scope of economic investigation, except in so far as it affects production and distribution" (p. 69), and with the author's entire neglect of the treatment of consumption. We are left with the impression that the author has arbitrarily limited the range of his chapters, that he is more orthodox than his definitions.

The interest of the present work lies, then, chiefly in the author's "fundamental concepts," and the *bouleversement* produced in applying them to the time-honored doctrines of economics. One may see at once, for instance, how the Ricardian theory of rent is plowed up by regarding the return for the free gifts of nature as interest on capital. Whether the intellectual readjustment made necessary is worth while is another matter. The objections raised against the classical theory do not seem to be valid. For instance, it is said to rest upon "the fact that under some circumstances, situation may bring no return for its services" (p. 232), and upon the assumption of an unlimited supply of cultivable land (p. 235). But these hypotheses are by no means essential to the theory, as expounded by Ricardo, to say nothing of its modern exponents. With the idea that the theory combated depends upon no-rent situation, our author endeavors to show that under certain circumstances such situation will not exist.

No-rent situation [he says] will be found, if anywhere, on the margin of cultivation . . . . But the existence of a no-rent situation on the margin of cultivation is not necessarily permanent. Should population increase to such an extent that all cultivable area becomes occupied and should the demand for commodities raise their price above the expense of production, no-rent situation might entirely disappear (p. 232).

Of course, no-rent situation is found on the margin of cultivation since there is no rent there of any kind. But no-rent situation is found elsewhere. It depends wholly on relations to market. Take, then, the situation which pays no rent merely because of these relations. No matter how high prices may rise, no part of the income is situation rent until the situation becomes relatively more favorable than some other. Grant the existence, then, of situation rent, and of no-rent situation, both phenomena are permanent. The same is not true of no-rent land, since the zero element there is with the marginal dose of capital and labor. The author's contention is not vital if it were sustained, but it is not.

Confusion of thought arises from the failure to distinguish between rent as payment and rent as portion due to superior productivity. If this distinction be regarded, the law of rent may be stated more definitely than it is in this book, or in most others on political economy. An economic law is usually defined as a tendency. The tendency is not revealed in any of our author's distributive laws. They are all expressed in the following form: The given share depends primarily upon the value of the services of the corresponding factor; the value of the services of the corresponding factor depends upon the relation of the supply thereof to the demand therefor. This is only to say that rent, interest etc., depend upon supply and demand. If I am right, the law of rent (accepting the author's definition of it) might be formulated roughly as follows: The payment of rent varies with the supply of and the demand for the services of situation, and tends toward the surplus produce due to the superior efficiency of the given situation. Similarly the idea of tendency might be introduced into the laws of interest, wages, and profits.

In his treatment of competition and monopoly the author has some strikingly suggestive remarks. Like so many other writers, however, he fails to distinguish between unconscious and impersonal competition and the brutal and wasteful struggle of so much of modern industry. "Competition" he tells us, "means contests between men" (p. 61), and without making it clear that it means something else too, he declares that it is "absolutely essential to progress" (p. 66). The statement without due modification is misleading. Competition as a contest of men over selfish ends must diminish as progress becomes more conscious. Action alone is necessary to development, and the survival of the fittest may be secured by conscious choice.

These few words of criticism are not meant to disparage the book

under consideration. It is commendable in many respects. It is written in a straightforward and interesting style, with no verbiage. Consequently the author's meaning is always clear. The reasoning is, in general, logical. It contains valuable criticism of some of the accepted theories. Independence of thought and originality are manifested throughout.

I. W. HOWERTH.

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*The Theory of Value Before Adam Smith.* By HANNAH ROBIE SEWALL. (Publications of the American Economic Association. Third series. Vol. II, No. 3.) New York: The Macmillan Company, 1901. 8vo, pp. iv + 128.

UNTIL the appearance of this monograph the only comprehensive sketch of the development of the theory of value was that furnished by Professor Zuckerkandl's *Theorie des Preises*. This could not be used to advantage by students who were not acquainted with three European languages, and was marred by obvious defects of arrangement. Dr. Sewall's study may therefore advance the traditional claim that it fills a long felt want, though to be sure it deals only with the earlier period of economic speculation.

As a history of doctrine, the monograph possesses solid if not brilliant merits. It gives lucid summaries of what little the earlier writers found to say about value, largely in their own words. Like a German treatise, it begins with Aristotle. A few paragraphs are devoted to Roman ideas, or the lack of them, and then the canonist doctrines of just price, as expounded by Thomas Aquinas, are set forth. In the second chapter, Grotius and Puffendorf receive much attention as representatives of the writers on jurisprudence, who gradually admitted that an ethical justification exists for competitive prices, at the same time that the modern conception of value-in-exchange was developing in the writings of the empirical mercantilists. Finally, in chapter three, Dr. Sewall deals at some length with Petty, Locke, Cantillon, Quesnay and his disciples, Galvani, Turgot and Condillac, and Sir James Steuart.

By all odds the most interesting parts of the discussion are the frequently interspersed passages in which the writer traces the connection between the development of economic theory and economic conditions. For example, she points out, that the conception of exchange value could not prevail except under a "money economy" where people